

# LOVED — WEEK TWO — LOVE COMES FROM KNOWING GOD

1 John 4:7b

December 3, 2023

## 1. Introduction

a. Welcome—Guests

b. Mission & Vision

i. 1000 Kids Final Week—if not packing, donate

ii. Finance Update + Year-End Giving

c. Series—Loved: The Message of Christmas

i. LOVED: The Message of Christmas — 1 John 4:7-12

1. The best Christmas gifts are ones that show you how much you are loved. They communicate that someone knows you well, cares about you, and wants you to know it. In the familiarity of the Christmas story, we might overlook that God has given us that kind of gift in the birth of Jesus. The Bible says God showed his love for us by sending Jesus into the world so we can live through him. The message of Christmas is that **YOU ARE LOVED.**

a. We have a hard time grasping God's love for us, but it's the most important thing.

2. This advent season we'll see six ways God's love is revealed in 1 John 4:7-12.

ii. Last Week—God is the source of love

iii. Today —**Love Comes From Knowing God**

1. 1 John 4:7b. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

**2. Knowing God as Father**

- a. **1 John 5:1a.** Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.

- i. To be born of God is to have him as your father—to benefit from his loving act of adopting you.

1. **1 John 3:1.** See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

- b. Newborns & children love their parents just because they're there.

- i. Mom & dad might be great people or real jerks. A young child doesn't know the difference. There's a natural bond and affection by nature of the birth relationship.

- ii. At the same time, a young child has no appreciation for the sacrificial love being shown to them by a good parent.

1. **STORY.** Two sleep-deprived dads on church staff.

- c. As children grow their love becomes affected by the kind of people their parents are.

- i. In healthy relationships, the love from child to parent is enriched from “just because” to an appreciation for who they are and what they do.

1. STORY. My parents. Mom prays every day for me & my siblings. Dad sacrificed promotions to be home. Do what you have to do.
- ii. In unhealthy relationships, that natural love becomes strained or broken.
- d. I think there's a similar dynamic in our relationship with God as Father.
- i. To be born of God is to love him just because of the relationship. Like a newborn child, we're dependent on God and find safety in his presence, but we can't really appreciate him until we get to know him as a person.
    1. "Yes, God is a person. But, when we say that God is a "person," we do not mean that He is a human being. We mean that God possesses "personality" and that He is a rational Being with self-awareness."  
[www.gotquestions.org/is-God-a-person.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/is-God-a-person.html)
    2. "God the Father is a Person with a mind (Isaiah 55:8-9), emotions (Psalm 78:40), and a will (1 Peter 2:15)." *ibid.*
  - ii. As we grow older in our relationship with God, our love becomes affected by who we perceive him to be. This is where it gets tricky.
    1. The Bible says God is defined by love (more on that next week), but even in scripture we read things about God that don't seem loving to us (like destroying men, women, children & animals in the OT).
    2. In our lives we witness things & we experience things that make us wonder whether God does indeed love the

world, whether he loves us.

3. As we grow older, we recognize that God is complex. While love is at his core, he's not just one thing. He's many things. In his complexity, it's easy for us to lose sight of his love. As a consequence, our love for him and for others might diminish.
  - a. While God is gentle, kind, and approachable (which is the kind of heavenly father most of us want), he's not just a safe, grandfatherly figure who sits in the same chair, humming the same tune every day, giving us Jolly Ranchers and dollar bills.
  - b. The Bible presents God in many ways. In fact, he has more than thirty formal titles.
    - i. Sometimes I think I wear a lot of hats at home and work, but not like God!
    - ii. **God is ...**
      1. **Father**
      2. **Master**
      3. **The Most High**
      4. **The God who Sees**
      5. **The God of Knowledge**
      6. **The Everlasting God**
      7. **God Almighty**
      8. **The Creator**
      9. **Our Provider**
      10. **Our Rock**

- iii. We could go on. And if we look hard enough, we can find love at the center of every dimension of God’s character. But there are a few ways God is revealed to us that communicate his love in particular. At least for me, and perhaps you too.
- iv. As we sit with today’s theme—love comes from knowing God—I want us to get to know God a little better in three ways today.
  - 1. The Lord our Healer
  - 2. The Lord our Shepherd
  - 3. Immanuel — God With Us

### 3. **Knowing God as Healer** (Jehovah Rapha)

- a. **Exodus 15:26.** I AM the Lord who heals you.
  - i. STORY. Calvin Carr’s song: “The Horse and the Rider”
  - ii. 2 Kings 5. The healing of Naaman
- b. **Psalm 147:3.** He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.
- c. **Matthew 4:23.** Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

### 4. **Knowing God as Shepherd** (Jehovah Rohi)

- a. **Psalm 23:1.** The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

b. **John 10:11.** “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

i. Adrian Rogers. The Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Jesus of the New Testament, guiding his people through a world of sin and brokenness into his eternal kingdom.

1. As the Good Shepherd, He dealt with the penalty of sin.

a. John 10:11

2. As the Great Shepherd, He deals with the power of sin.

a. Micah 5:4. He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.

3. As the Chief Shepherd, He's coming to take us from the very presence of sin.

a. 1 Peter 5:4. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

## 5. **Knowing God as Immanuel**

a. **Isaiah 7:14.** Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

i. God is with you. Your companion.

b. The Lord's Prayer

i. For the next few minutes, we will walk through the Lord's Prayer and notice how Jesus is teaching us to engage God for the building up of his kingdom. We will pause throughout leaving space to pray our own prayers based on the pattern of this important prayer.

ii. **Our Father**

1. Notice the prayer begins with "our." Jesus reminds us that we are welcomed into a new community, a family of people committed to the ways of Jesus. We don't walk alone. We follow Jesus together.

2. He also invites us to direct our prayers personally. God is not a distant, unconcerned deity. God is personal. God is overflowing with love for you personally.

iii. **Our Father in heaven**

1. Jesus is speaking not only about a location we hope to reside when we die. Jesus is telling us that God is every nook and cranny of creation - both spiritual and physical. God is always with us. God is even closer than the air we breathe.

iv. **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.**

1. Hallowed simply means holy or sacred. God is set apart for reverence. God is King, creator and sustainer of the universe. The depth of God's power and authority is too great to comprehend.

2. Let's take a deep breath together. God is with us now. We don't need to earn our way into God's presence, we just need to turn our attention to God. Take another deep breath. God is closer than the air we breathe.
3. Consider the one you are addressing this morning. Our holy God who loves us more deeply than we can possibly comprehend.
4. And finally think about who God is. Who do you need God to be in this season? Healer? Shepherd? Immanuel? Take a moment and tell God.

a. *15-Second Pause*

v. **Your kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

1. The kingdom of God is where what God wants to be done is done. It is a place marked by deep love, authentic joy, and abiding peace.
2. Jesus invites us to live with him in the kingdom, to align our lives with his teaching, and serve his kingdom today.
3. Express your desire for God's kingdom to come in your own words. Is there a specific place you are longing for God's kingdom to come? Tell God about it now.

a. *20-Second Pause*

vi. **Give us this day our daily bread.**

1. In the original language it reads, "Give us today the bread we need for today."



2. What do you need today? What concerns are on your mind, for yourself, for your friends and family, for our church & community, for the world? Jesus invites us to bring these needs to God in prayer.
3. What do you need today? Bring your requests to the Lord.

a. *20-Second Pause*

vii. **Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

1. Notice Jesus invites us to consider our own brokenness before forgiving others. If we are willing to examine our own lives first, name the ways we have missed the mark, and ask for forgiveness, we will find ourselves humble enough to truly forgive others.
2. Take a moment to consider how you have fallen short this week and ask for God's forgiveness.

a. *15-Second Pause*

3. Forgiving those who have hurt us is not a way of dismissing the hurt. It is simply a way of letting go. When we hold onto unforgiveness we find ourselves trapped, stuck in the past offense. But Jesus invites us into the freedom of forgiveness, to let go.
4. Who do you need to forgive? Who is God bringing to mind this morning? Take a moment and express your forgiveness or even your desire to forgive.

a. *20-Second Pause*

viii. **Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.**

1. Jesus is teaching us to pray against the evil one. In scripture, Satan is not a proper name. It is a word that means ‘the accuser.’ Perhaps you know the accuser’s voice as one that whispers, “You won’t fit in if you don’t have that.” “No one will know if you exaggerate a little to make yourself look good.” “If you don’t succeed, you’re worthless.” Or maybe the voice says “See. You can’t do it. Who could love you?”
2. When we pray against evil, we are standing against those voices whispering lies into our ears. These lies stand against the truth that we are loved. God’s love for you is the very foundation of your identity.
3. Take a moment to ask God to help you in times of struggle. Can you identify what lies the accuser whispers in your ear? Ask God to help you live grounded in your beloved-ness.

a. *20-Second Pause*

6. Invitation to Communion